

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested.

Paragraph [0021] has been amended to accurately describe Figure 4 as filed.

Paragraph [0030] has been emended on lines 1 & 2 to include to the before "center line 20", on line 8 to include support before "plate 54", and on line 16 to cancel "~~slot~~" and insert slat. On line 24, as has been inserted before "resins". The amendment on lines 1 & 2 improves grammar. The amendment on line 9 agrees with the terminology on line 15 of paragraph [0040]. The amendment description in paragraph [0030] on line 16 agrees with the last sentence of paragraph [0042].

Paragraph [0031] has been amended on lines 4 & 5 To cancel ~~side~~ and insert slide and on line 5 to include base before "64". Line 7 of paragraph [0031] includes "the base 64" and supports one amendment on line 5. Line 2 of paragraph [0031] includes "slide bearings 62" thereby supporting the other amendment on line 5.

Paragraph [0032] has been amended on line 17 to cancel ~~an~~ and on line 19 to insert process after "extrusion". The change on line 17 improves grammar. The change on line 21 properly describes "pulltrusion".

Paragraph [0033] has been emended on line 3 to cancel ~~strength~~ and insert strengthen. This change improves grammar.

Paragraph [0036] has been amended on line 27 to include be before "a threaded member" to improve grammar.

Claims 1-8 were rejected as anticipated by Foster (U.S. Patent 5,806,660). Claim 1 as amended includes a plurality of side by side parallel floor slats. Each floor slat has a top section, and integral first side wall and an integral second side wall. A first bottom flange is integral with the first side wall of each floor slat. A second bottom flange is integral with the second side wall of each floor slat. A top section cantilevered portion is integral with the top section of each floor slat and extends laterally outward from the second side wall. A seal flange is integral with the first side wall of each floor slat and cooperates with an outboard side of the first side wall to form a seal retainer channel that is outboard of the outboard side of the first side wall. The top section of each floor slat includes a downwardly facing bearing contact surface between the first side wall and the second side wall. A floor slat with the features set forth above has a top section cantilevered portion extending laterally outward from the second side wall in combination with a seal retainer channel that is outboard of the first side wall and describes a floor slat that is not symmetrical about a vertical center plane extending the length of the floor slat.

Foster (U.S. Patent 5,806,660) discloses two different floor slats 10 and 12. Both Foster floor slats are

symmetrical. The floor slats of Applicants claim 1 as amended is nonsymmetrical as explained above. There are other known non symmetrical floor slats. However the lack of symmetry is only one of a number of differences. Foster floor slat 10 has two cantilevered portions of the top section and no seal retainer channel. It is also noted that Foster's floor slat 10 does not have a downwardly facing bearing contact surface between the first and second side walls of each floor slat. There is always a vertical space 98 between the top portions 52 and 54 of the hold down members 20 and the top panel portion 60 of the conveyer slats 10 of Foster as shown in Figure 3 and explained in column 6 on lines 46-49.

The floor slat 12 of Foster has two seal holding channels 82 and 84 but no cantilevered extension of the top plate 32 as shown in Figure 4. A version shown in Figure 6 has a seal retainer flange that extends laterally outward from the top plate a short distance. The Foster conveyor has each of the floor slats 10 supported by two adjacent floor slats 12. The entire weight of the cargo is transferred through bearings 18 to beams 16. The beams 14 between each pair of beams 16 do not receive load through hold down members 20. The bearings 18 are therefore heavily loaded and will most likely have a relatively short life.

In view of the above remarks claim 1 as amended clearly distinguishes over Foster and is allowable.

Claims 2-9 are dependent upon claim 1 and are allowable

with claim 1 for reasons set forth above.

The allowance of claims 10-18 is appreciated.

New claim 19 is original claim 9 rewritten in independent form. Applicants appreciate the allowance of claim 9 subject to being rewritten in independent form.

This application as amended is in condition for allowance for reasons set forth above. Reconsideration and allowance is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted

Arthur L. Wilkens

By his attorney,

Robert L. Farris

Robert L. Farris  
Registration No. 25,112  
5291 Colony Drive North  
Saginaw, MI 48638  
989-799-8787

RLF/maf  
enclosure